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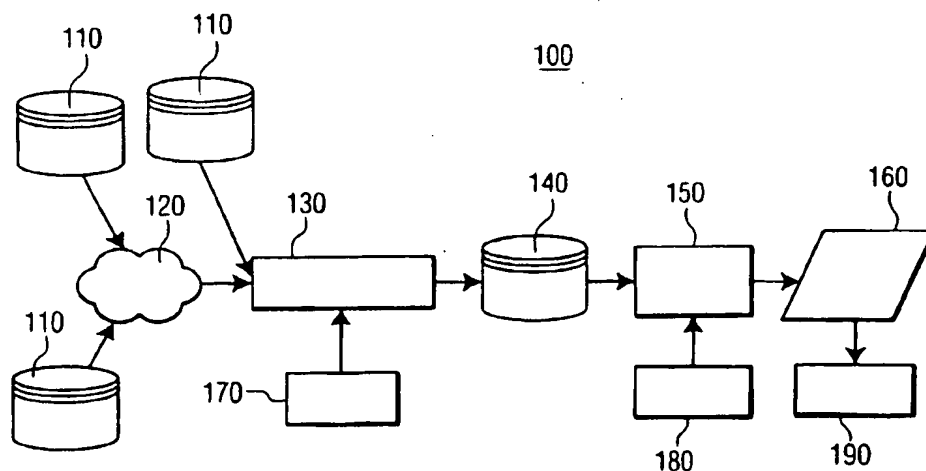
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(54) Title: **HIERARCHICAL PLAYLIST GENERATOR**



(57) Abstract: A playlist generator partitions the playlist generation process into a multi-stage, hierarchical process. At an example highest hierarchical level, the user's "general" preferences are applied. These general preferences reflect the user's "tastes", and are relatively constant. At a lower level of the hierarchy, the user's "specific" preferences are applied. These specific preferences reflect the dynamic time-dependent or eventdependent aspects of a user's entertainment preferences. The high-level preferences generate a subset of material from the global collection of material, and the lower-level preferences are applied to this subset of material as the user's immediate preferences change. By segregating the playlist generation process hierarchically, efficiency is gained by applying immediate preference changes to a smaller subset of material, and coherency is improved by limiting the subsequent selection processes to a given subset of the material.

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